586 After they are weaned, the children return to their father, unless the dowry has not been paid in full.

CHAPTER IV. BIRTH AND FILIATION

[843] A pregnant woman continues with her work until the moment of her delivery. A Muhutu woman may even give birth while working 844 in the fields. This must not be considered the result of her hard lot but is due to the influence of tradition. Seeing her relatives and neighbors behaving in this way, she would never imagine that she might remain inactive while awaiting her child's arrival.

[787] When the event is near, the auguries are consulted to find out the most favorable place for the [35] birth. It might take place at the home of the wife's parents.

846 During the week following the birth, the woman rests; her husband surrounds her with attention and sees that she lacks nothing, meat, milk, beer, etc. (guhemba umubyeyi, lit., to reward the mother). In addition, the wife's parents also bring her presents. About 553 the eighth day the mother begins to go out again on condition that the 292 day is an even one (1). For this occasion, she puts on her finest clothes,

[805] [777] [461]

1. The week in Ruanda has four work days and one day of rest. Uneven days are considered ill-omened.

a dress of cowskin (ikanda), or if she is a Mututsi, a leopardskin with which she covers her shoulders. On her head she puts on a kind of crown (urugori) made of sorghum straw (2) which she will proudly wear

2. Among the rich Batutsi, the urugori is trimmed with beads.

from then on, for it is the emblem of a mother's dignity. The young 553 mother places herself near the door of the rugo with her husband. If the child is a boy, the father slips a miniature spear, bow, arrow, and shield between his fingers so that he will be brave. The

Barrenness (ingumba) is
842 regarded as a misfortune and is grounds for divorce. It is not
586 unusual for a Barundi mother to give birth to a child just one year after a previous birth. In Ussumbwa the period will be at least two years since an infant first has to be weaned before intercourse is permitted again; this is not the case in Urundi.
165 Child mortality also is very high in Urundi. Of the children 13 to 15 years old fewer than two thirds survive. One may often hear women saying that they lost ten children, but a sufficient number is left because of the high fertility (van der Burgt, Koloniale Rundschau [Colonial Review], 1913, pp. 721-722).

844 When delivery (uwurjasi) is near, the woman in labor is assisted by a few women neighbors who are called in and, in difficult cases only, by a "wise woman" or the medicine man who operates with all kinds of magic but who also uses really effective methods and techniques, ranging from herbal medicine
845 and light massage to Caesarean operations (see pp. 140, 142 ; No. 19, pp. 9, 363). I do not know how this latter operation is performed; presumably it is only performed on dead women in order to save the child or to remove it, as is expressly reported by Emin Pascha of the Bahima of Unjoro (Petermanns Mitteilungen [Petermann's Communications], 1879, p. 393).
[171] The Caesarean operation is also known in Ruanda, Ussuwi,
844 Kisiba, and Uganda (No. 48, p. 228). During her labor the woman lies on her sleeping mat, or she squats on the ground with her back propped against one of the poles which support the hut or with some other person supporting her from behind. At this time the men leave the hut. As soon as the child is born, it is washed with cold water and rubbed with butter. The placenta is buried in the hut under the mother's bed; the umbilical cord is severed with a chip of wood and kept as an amulet by the mother. The newborn infant's body is then squeezed and pulled by the mother so as to give the head and limbs the proper shape (No. 19, p. 9). Deformation of the skull, however, is not practiced.

846 After giving birth, the mother is washed with warm water, and her body is rubbed with herbal juices. She remains in the hut for four or five days, depending on whether she has given

846 birth to a girl or a boy. When she leaves the house, her head is newly shaved, and she wears a broad headband made from a corn leaf, probably as a symbol of fertility and as an amulet.

853 The mother suckles her baby as long as she has milk and as long as the physical condition of the infant seems to require it, which frequently is as much as three to four years. After giving birth to the child, she remains separated from her husband until her menstrual cycle begins again. However, if menstruation fails to occur, the separation is soon ended.

845 The birth of twins (amahassa) is greeted with mixed feelings. Van der Burgt is of the opinion that it gives rise to joy because the Barundi attribute a religious meaning to the birth of twins which they regard as "ope incubi" [the result of intercourse with a spirit] (No. 19, p. 325). On the other hand, Gasaldinger states that the birth of twins is considered a bad omen since twins are the favorites of Kiranga, and for this reason they will soon be taken away by him (die) unless the parents pay ransom by making large sacrificial offerings (No. 45, 1914, p. 314). I refrain from giving an opinion as to which conception is the correct one. However, it is a fact that the 845 782 birth of twins is followed by extraordinary rites, sacrifices, and celebrations. The underlying reason [111] for this is probably that it is known from experience that twins are usually physically weak, and also they cannot get a sufficient amount of nourishment from the mother. As a result, both (or one of them) usually die unless Kiranga is propitiated by the offering of sacrifices. Upon receiving the news of the birth of twins, crowds of neighbors and friends gather. They sing and provide presents and large amounts of food which, however, are only intended for the spirits and disappear at night. A priest (kiranga) is called in. Aided by his assistants and numerous participants, he first performs the ceremony of the "holy spear" (see p. 134). By [776] venerating this symbol, its patron, the great spirit Kiranga, master over all material things, is shown gratitude, and his special blessings are called down upon the twins and their parents (No. 19, 845 pp. 516, 324, 216). Then the young men, with their faces 535 painted red and yellow, perform ritual dances in the courtyard

784 There are special rules dealing with the consumption of water. The washing and drinking water in a house must never be completely used up. Every evening a little water is left in [782] a jug so that the manes can refresh themselves at night. This is called amasi y'Imana. The family will use this remaining water the next morning for washing themselves (No. 19, p. 6). [788] A person may not cross a river without first painting a line on his forehead with the mud from the shore.

Numerous rules affect family life. A father never enters [606] the hut of his daughter-in-law. Also, until his married [593] daughters have given birth to a child, the father may not see them unveiled (No. 19, p. 6). A woman who has just given [846] birth to a child cannot leave the house for three days, since otherwise the baby, but not the mother, would get sick. If [845] twins are born, a religious ceremony has to be performed (see p. 110), since otherwise the children would die. A son-in-law 606 must avoid his mother-in-law; a daughter-in-law must avoid her father-in-law. If the young people nevertheless meet them, they must run or at least turn away from their parents-in-law. This is considered a sign of great respect. Its non-observance would be a serious insult and would lead to breaking the engagement [sic]. Basically, however, the reason for this is probably the fear of the taboo against contact with close relatives which is connected with conceptions of exogamy. A violation of this taboo is believed to bring harm and impurity upon the violator. This taboo is strictly observed by many peoples [171] of East Africa, for example, by the Wangoni, Wagogo, Massai, Wakamba, Basoga, Baganda, and others. (No. 30, Vol. II, pp. 400, 403, 412, 420, 461, 508). In Urundi the young couple is bound by the rule to avoid their parents-in-law until they have children, but after that the young people must show the greatest attention and subservience to the wishes of their parents-in-law. It often happens that the demands made by the latter are so exacting that the young couple has hardly enough time left for taking care of their own housework and the fields (No. 23, 1914, p. 122).

482 The pad used for carrying burdens on the head (ingata) 784 has to be treated with particular care. No one may sit on it for

234 [142] While the cow is being milked, a fire of cow dung is kept burning beside her. The smoke keeps off the troublesome stable flies, and the animals can stand quietly.

Young calves are kept in special small huts or in closed-off portions of the entrance room of the dwellings (umuliango).

415 The milk is stored in cylindrical vessels (kianzi) crudely carved out of wood. The vessels are washed with cow urine, and from time to time they are fumigated. A cone-shaped lid 272 is made from a bundle of straw sewed to form a spiral. The milk is drunk chiefly when it is curdled (kivugutu); it is beaten with a small stick to change this consistency. Fresh milk (amata) and buttermilk (amachunde) are also drunk.

[413]

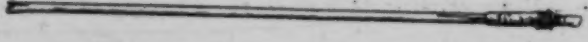

Fig. 33. Arrow for Bloodletting, Rwanda. (1/6 actual size. III E 13744. 58 1/2 centimeters long.)

Besides milk, the blood of cattle is also drunk. For this purpose the bulls are bled from time to time by shooting a special arrow into the neck vein at close range. The short iron tip of the arrow is set into a wooden shaft. The upper part of the shaft is bound, to prevent the wood from splitting and also to prevent the arrow from penetrating too deeply into the vein. The lower end of the arrow has a notch into which the bowstring fits. When the blood is drawn off, a tourniquet of rope is tied around the neck below the wound.

[846] The blood is drunk either fresh or cooked. It is sometimes also mixed with milk, and in this form it is given to women after childbirth "to replace the lost blood."

232 Bloodletting is also practiced on sick animals by specialists. It is said that the animals are given the drawn blood as a reward.

262 Meat is eaten only on special occasions. Beef cattle have a very great value, and beef, therefore, is regarded as the greatest delicacy.

844 in a kneeling position. Only women and girls may be present; men are not allowed.

845 If the mother dies during labor in Ussuwi and Bukumbi, a Caesarean operation is performed in order to save the child. It is said that in Kissaka and Mulera people do not dare to perform this operation.

844 After delivery the woman is nourished with a mixture of milk and cow's blood. Later, beer (nzoga) is added to this diet, as well as a mixture of peas and bananas of the nkamba variety.

The navel cord is cut with a reed splinter. On the fourth day, it is said, the navel is finally trimmed. After this the mother 846 sweeps out the hut and places the rubbish in two baskets (ntaro) which she carries out with the help of her neighbors. The women go in a row, one next to the other, and in this way they accompany the young mother to a previously chosen spot where the contents of the baskets are scattered. After the women return, the husband serves banana beer to the midwife, but before that he performs a libation.

846 On this day the neighbors call and bring presents in honor of 431 the child's birth. The presents consist of food and drink, for ex- 852 ample, bananas, peas, sweet potatoes, beer, and, among the Batutsi, milk. This ceremony is known as bihembo.

852 In Kissaka the guests kneel in honor of the father. He accepts the honors standing, holding a wooden spear (muko) in his hand and with a sword (ngota) behind his back. He calls upon Binego and Mugasha and expresses his gratitude for the honor by spitting nzoga (banana beer) upon the visitors. If the newborn child is a boy, the father puts a small spear, a small bow, a nail upon which to hang the bow, and a small shield woven of grass into his hand. When he gives the bow to the child, the father spits and says: "akavuna muheto kandi ntaka uvune (if he breaks the bow, may he not break it again)." When he presents the spear, he says: "arakagua mukicho kandi ntaka kigwemo (if he is attacked in ambush, may it not happen again)." When the shield is presented: "kiliho arakagua mungabo kandi ntaka kigwemo (if he should fall upon his shield, may he [229] not fall again)." Finally, turning to the nail on which the bow is to be hung, he says: "arakavuna ingaugo kandi ntaka uvune (if the nail breaks, may it no longer do so later)."